The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

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CONTRIBUTIONS in aid of the gratuitous publication and circulation of the *Chronicle and Index:*—

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Mr. Savage, Clough - -	0	2	6
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Further contributions, which may be sent to the Rev. J. C. Street, will be duly acknowledged.

It will be a matter of great interest to our friends to know that the Anniversaries of the Unitarian Society are to be held at Easter, and that the Preacher for the year will be the Rev. Dr. G. Vance Smith, Principal of Carmarthen College, and one of the New Testament Revisers. We shall give further particulars in our next issue.

The following subjects have been dealt with by the Rev. J. C. Street, at his Sunday Evening Lectures, during the last month:—

"Beyond the Veil." (Part 2).

"Beyond the Veil" (Part 3).

"How I Left Orthodoxy!" 1. My home surroundings and early teachings! My revolt against Predestination.

2. Calvinism and Methodism—their joint and their adverse influence upon me.

In continuation of the course of *How I Left Orthodoxy*, Mr. Street will take up the following subjects:—

March 7th, 1886.—A way opening out for me. "Through night to light." My surrender of the belief in Hell.

March 14th, 1886.—The new Path. From Trinity to Unity. From Tyranny to Fatherhood.

March 21st, 1886.—Brighter outlooks! "The wilderness blossoming as the rose." No castes, but universal brotherhood.

April 4th, 1886.—Still grander prospects. No partial rescue, but universal salvation.

April 11th, 1886.—Light thrown on the Past. Its uprising towards God.

April 18th, 1886.—Divine Light for ever. Increasing happiness, and endless growth.

It will be a matter of interest to many of our readers to know that the Rev. Christopher J. Street, of Glasgow, has received and accepted a call to the pastorate of the Free Christian Church at Croydon, near London. Mr. Street has done some excellent work in connection with the Lectureship of the Scottish Unitarian Association, and we do not doubt that his great energy and ability will find ample scope in the heart of England.

The annual meeting of the Domestic Mission to the Poor of Belfast was held in the Central Hall of the First Presbyterian Congregation, on Thursday, the 18th of February, under the presidency of the Rev. T. Dunkerley, of Comber. There were between thirty and forty friends and subscribers present, including Mr. Weatherall, the new missionary, and the Revs. A. Gordon, R. J. Orr, and James C. Street.

The report of the Committee showed that good work had been done during the year, but that the reserve fund of the Mission was being drained, and that there was need of greater financial support if the Mission was to be preserved in vigour. Mr. Weatherall's report gave evidence of great care and discrimination, and showed that he fully appreciated and understood the nature of the work he had undertaken. His record of seven month's

labour was of a most satisfactory character. We hope he may be both happy and useful in his ministry to the Poor of Belfast.

THE Superintendent of the Hopeton Street Sunday School acknowledges, with thanks, a large contribution of books for the Library from Mr. Darbishire, and 5/- from Mr. Drummond.

THE Mutual Improvement Association has had a very interesting month. On February 1st, Mr. Fisher read a most thoughtful and glowing estimate of the rank of Ralph Waldo "Emerson as a teacher;" on the 8th, the Rev. G. W. Bannister delivered an attractive Astronomical Lecture, entitled "A look out of the carriage window;" on the 15th, there were read four brief original compositions—(1) Hamlet, by Mr. M'Grath; (2) Liberty, by Mr. Knox; (3) Macauley, by Mr. S. H. Street; (4) The coming man (anonymous), read by Mr. W. W. Drummond; and on the 22nd, a thorough and succinct statement of "The views of John Stuart Mill on some religious and moral questions," by Mr. W. A. Fitzhenry, M.A. Great interest was taken in all the Papers and Essays, and excellent discussions followed. We rejoice to see the continued vigour of this excellent association.

ON Thursday evening, February 20th, the annual concert of the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association, which has now reached its fourteenth session, was given in the Rosemary Street Lecture Hall. The hall was well filled by the hour announced for the commencement of the concert, and about a quarter of an hour later the first item, a part-song entitled "Drops of Rain" (Lemmens), was rendered by a choir of about twenty voices, who, later on, contributed Parry's "Sleighing Glee"—to which was added an accompaniment of sleigh bells with happy effect—"Jack and Jill" (Caldicott), for the text of which the composer had descended to the lore of the nursery, and Hatton's "Gipsy Maidens." Mr. R. T. Mahood opened the solo list with Archer's popular ballad "Alice, where art thou?" He was heard to even better advantage toward the close of the concert in "Eily Mavourneen," from Benedict's "Lily of Killarney." Mr. Curran contributed carefully "The Haven Aloft" (Watson) and "Heaven and Earth" (Pinsuti), in the latter of which he was encored, and repeated the later half of the song. Mr. Jonas, who has made a favourable impression as a pianist, played as a pianaforte duet with Mr. Ladell the overture to "William Tell" (Rossini) in good style, and, in the second part of the programme, the overture to "Cleopatra" (Mancinelli) as a solo with marked acceptance. Two vocal duets,—"My boat is waiting" (Smart), Miss Darbishire and Mr. Ireland; and "Love shall never die" (Moir), Miss Darbishire and Dr. M'Caw—were carefully rendered. Miss Gordon gave "The Sailor Boy's Farewell," and Miss Fisher sung "The New Kingdom" (Tours) in a style which did not admit of criticism. A violin obligato was supplied to this selection by Mr. Balfour, who also played in good style a fantasia on "Martha" (Singeleé). A very well rendered item was a duet by Miss Barry and Miss Gordon, "I would that the love" (Mendelssohn), which was encored, as was also Miss Barry's solo, "The Last Dream" (Cowen). Miss Barry has a pleasing voice, which she uses with good taste. Miss Darbishire, who, as is well known, is a cultured singer, found it too late to give her song "A Dream of Peace" (Pinsuti), but Mr. Ireland rendered "'Tis I," by the same composer, fairly well. Mr. Ladell supplied the accompaniments efficiently during the evening, and Mr. Gordon acted as conductor.

THE monthly religious services for the young have been conducted as usual during the last month at Rosemary Street and Hopeton Street Schools by the Rev. J. C. Street. The first took place on Sunday, February 7th, when Mr. Street delivered an address on "The rich man and Lazarus;" and the second on Sunday, February 21st, when he spoke on "The Pharisee and the Publican." There were good attendances and the services were of a profitable character.

The annual meeting of the members of the Second Congregation, Belfast, took place on Tuesday evening, February 23rd, in the Congregational Halls, Rosemary Street. Tea was provided and served by the ladies of the congregation. After tea a hymn was sung, and then Mr. Darbishire was called to the chair. After a brief congratulatory address, the reports of the congregation and its various institutions were read, and the Treasurer's statement of accounts, all of which were declared to be of a satisfactory character. The adoption of the reports was moved by the Chairman, and seconded by Mr. George Fisher, and then unanimously adopted. The places of the retiring members of the committee were then filled up, and Mr. J. F. Mulligan was appointed Treasurer, and Mr. John Ritchie re-appointed Secretary of the congregation. On the motion of Mr. A. Millin, seconded by Mr. D. Bulmer, Mr. Darbishire was warmly thanked for his services, and an expression of regret that he was soon to leave Belfast to reside in England was shared in by all who were present. After this the meeting was made special in order that new Trustees might be appointed for the property held jointly by the 1st and 2nd Congregations. The Rev. J. C. Street was called to the chair. A resolution was unanimously passed that the following gentlemen be asked to act as Trustees:—Mr. John Greenfield, Mr. W. Rankin, Mr. W. C. Dobbin, Dr. John M'Caw, and Mr. A. Millin. The Chairman then delivered his annual address, and in doing so, reviewed his ministry of fifteen years. During the whole address he was listened to with the deepest interest, and the various suggestions he offered were received with great cordiality. The proceedings closed with prayer.

The Treasurer acknowledges the receipt of the following subscriptions for the Unitarian Society for 1885:—

Mrs. Malcomson,	Belfast,	..	£0	10	0
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SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

A Conference of Sunday School teachers, and others interested in Sunday School work, was held in Mountpottinger, under the auspices of the Unitarian Society, on Thursday evening, February 11th. There was a large attendance. Among those present were:—Revs. Thomas Dunkerley, B.A. (Comber); W. Reynolds, B.A. *(pastor loci);* James C. Street (Belfast); G. W. Bannister (Moneyrea); J. H. Bibby (Balee); Messrs. J. Darbishire, R. M'Calmont, F.C.S.; H. Darbishire, D. Bulmer, W. W. Drummond, J. Worthington, A. Hanna, J. Gilliland, W. Wright, Napier, &c., &c. After those present had partaken of the hospitality of the Mountpottinger congregation, the Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, President of the Unitarian Society, was called to the chair.

Mr. Dunkerley, taking the chair, said it had been the custom of their essayist, when occupying the chair at previous meetings, to refer to the objects for which these Conferences were held. We all knew now the objects of these meetings. We all, as teachers, desired

encouragement in our work, and it was necessary for us to have it. Our essayist was to introduce a very important subject, which should enlist the attention of everyone, but more especially of those interested in Sunday School work. The form of culture for children must vary according to their aptitudes and circumstances. For us, as teachers, no branch of learning could be out of the way. The best way for us to benefit the children was to impart to them that which we knew ourselves best. A friend of his had excused himself from teaching in the Sunday School because he said he had a difficulty in speaking from the Bible. He (the speaker) told him then not to teach from the Bible, but to give the children the advantage of his culture by imparting to them what he could teach best. His friend had eventually become one of his most earnest teachers. In his position as superintendent he had always impressed on his teachers to teach that subject which they knew best. For himself, he had always used the Bible for a text-book, perhaps because he had had to make a special study of it. Besides the interest of the subject, there was another reason why we should listen with interest to the essayist's paper. Some of those present knew that Mr. Darbishire was about to leave them. Mr. Darbishire had always worked so energetically, not only in these Conferences, but in all Sunday School work, that he would be greatly missed.

Mr. Darbishire, in his paper, of which we can only give the briefest outline, impressed upon those present the great responsibility which rested on them to see that they did not neglect their own individual self-culture. They should not neglect any of their powers—moral, mental, or physical. They should all strive to make themselves morally better, and in the cultivation of their powers their intellectual faculties should not be neglected. They should all give to their mind the freest range possible by the study of the most varied literature, and by hearing all sides of every question. He also urged the necessity of not forgetting to sustain the bodily powers. In proportion, said the essayist, as we educate our faculties will be our happiness. Self-culture consisted in mastering the mind and strengthening the affections. In conclusion, he said that self-culture was not only the great responsibility of our own life, but it was a social duty which we owed to those around us.

The Chairman, rising, said we had not been dissappointed in Mr. Darbishire, although we had expected much from him. He would not make any remarks on the paper, as he saw many before him who took a deep interest in Sunday School matters.

Mr. M'Calmont said they had all listened with breathless attention to Mr. Darbishire's paper. He desired to impress on the young people present that they ought to take up some one subject, and give it their special attention. He urged on the young men present to study history in some form or another. He was sure they were all very sorry that this was perhaps Mr. Darbishire's last appearance at these meetings.

Mr. Bulmer, being called upon by the Chairman, said he would have much preferred to have been allowed to remain a listener. He felt deeply obliged to Mr. Darbishire for his paper. As a sort of valedictory address, Mr. Darbishire could not have chosen a more suitable subject. He could not criticize the paper, as it was more a collection of precepts, which were not open to criticism, than anything else.

Mr. Bannister said Mr. Darbishire had been a source of light and culture to them all, and it was very appropriate for him to teach them before he went away how to cultivate themselves. With regard to the body. The keeping of it in order was the first necessity for intellectual vigour, and therefore it needed our careful attention. He agreed with Mr. Darbishire in his remarks concerning business. Mr. Bannister then quoted Ruskin, to the effect that real religion consisted of deeds, and that England had but one religion—the religion of getting on. Ruskin asks, Where are we getting to? He believed that Ruskin had there pointed out our great failing; in that respect we compared unfavourably with past generations when there were no bankers, and when people wandered about as Christ

and his disciples did. They had more time then for self-culture. The consequence was that the men of those days towered far above the men of our own time, and in those days religion was born. For the purpose of self-culture the speaker believed there was nothing better than everybody having a hobby of their own, he did not care what it was. He had known a young man who had done himself great good by taking to shorthand, this hobby had caused him to attend lectures and other meetings which he would not otherwise have attended, and where he had gained much; he had known another, who had taken to hunting out beetles and even that was a salvation to him. But we might have higher hobbies than these, such as astronomy, botany, &c. He had, however, known nothing which had helped young people so much as preparing for their Sunday School class.

Mr. H. Darbishire, criticising Mr. Bannister's remarks, said he was very well pleased to be living to day, and to have a banking account instead of a cow. Religion must have failed in its object if this age was in so bad a condition, for himself he was very well satisfied to live in the religious state of the present day. Although he had never taken a class in Sunday School himself, and probably never would, he honoured those who gave up their Sundays to that work. He would put that form of Christianity against anything they had heard of 2,000 years ago.

Mr. Bibby said after hearing Mr. Darbishire's paper he could understand the influence which he exerted over the life of many young men he knew. He could not say how grieved he felt that they were going to lose Mr. Darbishire. It would be a loss to the Unitarian Society that could not soon be replaced.

Mr. Drummond thought that the tendency of young men was to be in too big a hurry to make money and to neglect the cultivation of their spiritual faculties for that end.

Mr. Reynolds said he must congratulate those present on hearing the whole of the paper, and be thankful that he had been in time to hear the concluding quotation. He thought 2,000 years ago was quite 2,000 years ago in the matter of self-culture. If there were no Mechanics' Class, and no Young Men's Christian Societies, nor Working Men's Institutes and like societies for their benefit, he might agree with Mr. Bannister. If it had not been for money, and those who had laboured for it, there would have been no great discoveries, no inventors, no Darwin. He thought the great difference of this age to 2,000 years ago was that now one in a thousand was inspired, then only one in a million.

Mr. Hanna said the subject of the paper was one we all held very near to our hearts. The best place in his opinion for self-cultivation was out among our fellows. He did not agree with Mr. Bannister in his remarks on hobbies. He found that a man with a hobby was one to be avoided. We wanted more all-round men, and fewer with hobbies. He thought the reason for Mr. Bannister looking back 2,000 years was probably because a star in a dark sky shone out much more brilliantly than when the sky was studded with them. Ruskin had said some of the grandest things, but he had also said some of the most foolish. Ruskin asks, Where are we getting to? He thought we were progressing into a higher state of cultivation.

Mr. Dunkerley, at this stage, said he regretted that he was obliged to leave the meeting, as he had to catch his train, but Mr. Bannister would take his place.

Mr. Street thought, as it was getting late, he would take the liberty of bringing the meeting to a close, by proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Darbishire, and also to the Mountpottinger Congregation for their reception. He had been deeply interested in the paper—it had been the man displayed. He did not differ much from any of the speakers. The age of inspiration was the present age. The past had been the present, and God had been speaking. To-day was the present, and God was speaking now. Every age had been the present age, and God had spoken in every age. He could not believe that in this age, the heir of all the past ages, God was speaking less than in any previous age. He thought Mr. Bannister would bear testimony with him, that in their

memory many great and good men had shone forth. Need he remind them of Emerson, Parker, Channing and others.

Mr. Worthington seconded the motion, which was carried by applause.

Mr. Darbishire having replied for himself, and Mr. Napier for Mountpottinger, the meeting was brought to a close by the benediction.

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

"Truth is that which survives, and stands the tests, the vicissitudes, the wear and tear of experience, reflection, and controversy."

Asked jesting Pilate, "What is Truth?"
And would not stay, but went without,
Leaving unanswered that which was
To save a world in doubt.

"Yet what is Truth?" was answered more
In silence than by uttered tones,
Since sealed it was to be for aye
In tears and sighs and groans.

That lofty life and mighty heart
That walked the earth as man
Declared what's truth in life and deed
As language never can.

Yet "What is Truth?" if it must be told,—
In the trial of our lives,
The test of thought, the war of words,—
'Tis what alone survives!

H. W. HAZZEN.

THE METHOD OF RECEIVING AND THE DUTY OF PROCLAIMING THE TRUTH.

BY JAMES C. STREET.

(Concluded from our last Number.)

This lesson needed enforcement at the time of Jesus; it has been needed ever since; it is needed now. Avowedly, many teachers did not and do not proclaim all the truth they know. They talk of the world not being prepared for it; that their best truth would fall upon untilled soil, and die and yield no returns. Who made them judges in such a high matter? What do they know about the preparations in men's hearts? Is not their hesitation a sign of their own weakness and cowardice? Are they not afraid of running counter to the world's opinions? Are they not lacking in moral stamina? There is no need for their interference with the providence of God. He will take care of His truth. Not one jot or tittle of it will perish. It requires no fencing, and protecting, and buttressing by men. It will survive when all their vain defences have perished. Their simple duty is —if they have received a truth from God— to preach and teach it in all its fulness and completeness.

But this duty is as much overlooked and neglected in the present day as ever it was in the past. Thinkers and scholars have never been afraid of new truths—not even if they overturned many an old and cherished system —so far as themselves were concerned; they have been afraid of the influence upon the masses of the people; at least, this has been their plea. Any heresy, any new dogma, any fresh theory might be broached, and defended, and enforced if only it were confined to a few special souls who could keep the matter to themselves, and who would not proclaim it from the house-tops. The truth might be made known in the darkness, and whispered in the ear, but it must not be brought into the light and proclaimed to the people. In other words, scholars and thinkers and ecclesiastics have set themselves violently in antagonism with the teaching and command of Jesus. When Strauss published his "Life of Jesus" he was assailed first of all, not because of the heresy contained in his book, but because he had published it in the language of the people and not in Latin. He might have said what he choose in Latin, for then his opinions would have been confined to the learned, and they could have discussed them at leisure; but he committed a crime of the greatest magnitude by publishing his honest thoughts in the language that the people could understand. The very same crime was committed by Bishop Colenso. It has been said times without number that his criticisms on the Pentateuch should have been written in Latin. There could not be a greater confession of weakness on the part of such critics. I am ashamed to say that one bearing the venerated name of Arnold recommended this course. But Dr. Colenso remembered even what was more serious than his ordination vows, he

remembered that he was the minister of the great Truth-Speaker, and that the command of his great Teacher was imperative upon him, not to hide his light, not to confine his thoughts to the few, but to speak out to all in the open day. He remembered also certain advice given by Whately and Alford. Whately says—"If we gave way to a dread of danger from the inculcation of any truth, physical, moral, or religious, we manifest a want of faith in God's power, or in the will to maintain His own cause." There may be danger attendant on every truth, since there is none that may not be perverted by some, or that may not give offence to others; but, in the case of anything which plainly appears to be truth, every danger must be braved. We must maintain the truth, as we have received it, and trust to Him, who is "The Truth" to defend it. . . . The part of a lover of truth is, to follow her at all seeming hazards, after the example of Him who "Came into the world, that he should bear witness to the truth."

And Alford writes :—

"Speak thou the Truth. Let others fence,
And trim their words for pay;
In pleasant sunshine of pretence
Let others bask their day.

Guard thou the Fact: though clouds of night
Down on thy watch-tower stoop;
Though thou should'st see thine heart's delight
Borne from thee by their swoop.

Face thou the wind. Though safer seem
In shelter to abide,
We were not made to sit and dream;
The safe must first be tried."

Of these words Colenso says, they "will, I trust, be the means of cheering and comforting others, as they have cheered and comforted me, in coming forward to bear witness to the truth in these matters, as God has granted them the power to see it." If a man has obtained sight of a truth, or thinks he has, what is his duty? To hide it? to talk it over with a few in secret? to whisper it in the ear? No; he must make it known; he must proclaim it to the world; he must live it before men, else he defies the lesson of my text, contravenes the Divine law, and does his best to retard the growth of humanity.

There is far too much timidity. Only of late have *scientific* men dared to speak out; and even yet many of them speak falteringly where their science would enable them to speak confidently; but they are afraid of what the Church and the world will say; the fear of man is before their eyes. But in much greater degree does this timidity and moral cowardice obtain among students of theology and teachers of religion. Every one knows that within the borders of the popular churches, notably in the Established Church, there is a wide-spread amount of latent and whispered disbelief in the popular opinions. You come face to face with this wherever you go in society; you meet with it in almost all books that are not specifically dogmatic and theological; the press of the country has almost entirely, for a long time past, ignored the opinions which are avowedly those of the multitude; and yet the old dogmas are taught, the old creeds enforced, the old articles signed. There is a great abyss between the inward thought and the outward profession.

The one lesson wanted by the men and women of this age is *moral honesty*. They trim, and fence, and palter; they have one set of convictions at home and in business, and another for the church and the chapel; they are true to neither and cannot be true to both. I see not how men professing to believe in the Living God—the Truth Giver, and the Teacher Jesus—the Truth-Speaker, can dare to play fast and loose with convictions and principles and truths. Surely the moral guilt is great! I say with one of our old poets (Cumberland)—

"I praise not those,
Who in their petty dealings pilfer not,
But him, whose conscience spurns at secret fraud,
When he might plunder and defy surprise.
His be the praise, who, looking down with scorn
On the false judgment of the partial herd,
Consults his own clear heart, and boldly dares
To be, not to be thought, an *honest man*."

By and bye, the world will turn aside from the teachers who play fast and loose with principles, and go to "some plain, honest, earnest man-minister, lawyer, politician, lecturer, who only aims to tell the unheeded truth, and gives saving counsel to 'do justly and love mercy, and walk humbly with God,' . . and take what comes of it; and when he dies, it shall be said of him, as of the first Christian martyr, 'Devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.'"

Would that men could nobly make up their minds to let their speech and deed be the fair transcript of their thoughts! Would that we could see moral honesty and spiritual integrity winning their way to acceptance in the world! Would that the teaching of Christ were more thoroughly appreciated and more widely applied! The moral wastes of society would soon be

redeemed, false fashions and deceits would speedily pass away, and there would be growing up, stalwart and beautiful, a noble religious manhood and womanhood which would bring immeasurable blessings upon the world.

But there yet remains much to be done. The old lessons must be continually repeated and enforced. We must raise the trumpet-cry for outspoken sincerity. Wherever we find a Truth-Speaker we must strengthen him. Wherever a man dares to do as Lindsey, and Durant, and Priestley did; wherever we find a Luther, a Wesley, a Ware; wherever we see a Huxley, a Faraday, a Lyell, we must pay respectful homage to their boldness and honesty, and feel that in their several ways they are fulfilling the command of Jesus.

Every such man, every Church made up of such men, preserving traditions of freedom; believing in the divinity and immortality of truth; ready to welcome light from every corner of the universe; prompt to speak out boldly for conscience' sake; ready to shield and defend the brave confessors of truth—every such man and Church is a light-gleam in the world; is witnessing for God to mankind, and is practically carrying out the words of Jesus, "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops."

May God grant that having received and assimilated in the right method His Divine and quickening truths, we may be found faithful and bold in proclaiming them to all the world!

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